

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 6, 19 and 22 without prejudice to the filing of future continuing applications.

Please substitute the following claims 2, 14 and 20 for the claims 2, 14 and 20 now pending in the above-identified application.

Claim 1 (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a solid sustained-release microsphere preparation, which comprises freeze-drying a sustained-release microsphere preparation in a freeze-drying container of which the inner face is partially or wholly coated with a water-repelling base material, and the coated inner face is further partially or wholly coated with an ice layer wherein the water-repelling base material is ethylene tetrafluoride resin, ethylene trifluoride resin, ethylene difluoride resin, vinylidene fluoride resin, propylene hexafluoride-ethylene tetrafluoride copolymer resin, modified fluorine resin, ethylene tetrafluoride-perfluoroalkoxyethylene copolymer resin, or ethylene tetrafluoride-ethylene copolymer resin.
3. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein the inner face is the bottom face alone.
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein the freeze-drying container is a tray.
5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein the ice layer has a thickness of about 0.01mm to about 30 mm.
6. (Cancelled)

Claim 7 (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein sublimation is at 0°C or below.

Claim 9 (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein said microsphere is a microcapsule.

Claims 11-13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a sustained-release preparation comprising:

freezing water in a freeze-drying container having an inner face, wherein said inner face is wholly or partially coated with a water-repelling base material, to form an ice layer which wholly or partially coats said water-repelling base material **wherein the water-repelling base material is ethylene tetrafluoride resin, ethylene trifluoride resin, ethylene difluoride resin, vinylidene fluoride resin, propylene hexafluoride-ethylene tetrafluoride copolymer resin, modified fluorine resin, ethylene tetrafluoride-perfluoroalkoxyethylene copolymer resin, or ethylene tetrafluoride-ethylene copolymer resin;**

adding a sustained-release preparation suspension to said ice layer;

freezing said sustained-release preparation suspension over said ice layer to form

a sustained-release preparation layer;
sublimating water from said ice layer and said sustained-release preparation layer;
and then,
recovering a sustained-release preparation from said freeze-drying container.

Claim 15 (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 14 wherein said preparation is a
microsphere.

Claim 17 (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16 wherein said microsphere is a
microcapsule.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a sustained-release preparation comprising:
adding a sustained-release microsphere preparation suspension to a freeze-drying
container having an inner face, wherein said inner face is wholly or partially
coated with a water-repelling base material wherein said water-repelling base
material is ethylene tetrafluoride resin, ethylene trifluoride resin, ethylene
difluoride resin, vinylidene fluoride resin, propylene hexafluoride-ethylene
tetrafluoride copolymer resin, modified fluorine resin, ethylene tetrafluoride-

**perfluoroalkoxyethylene copolymer resin, or ethylene tetrafluoride-ethylene
copolymer resin;**

freezing said sustained-release microsphere preparation suspension to form a sustained-release preparation layer;
sublimating water from said sustained-release preparation layer; and then,
recovering a sustained-release preparation from said freeze-drying container.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein said microsphere is a microcapsule.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Withdrawn) A method for producing a solid sustained-release preparation, which comprises freeze-drying a sustained-release microcapsule preparation of leuporelin acetate in a freeze-drying container of which the inner face is partially or wholly coated with an ice layer or water-repelling base material.

24. (Withdrawn) A method for producing a sustained-release preparation comprising:
freezing water in a freeze-drying container having an inner face to form an ice layer which wholly or partially coats said inner face of said freeze-drying container;
adding a sustained-release microcapsule preparation suspension of leuporelin acetate to said ice layer;
freezing said sustained-release microcapsule preparation suspension over said ice layer to form a sustained-release preparation layer;

sublimating water from said ice layer and said sustained-release preparation layer;
and then,
recovering a sustained-release preparation from said freeze-drying container.